AN ESSAY ON ELOCUTION, OR, PRONUNCIATION.

Intended chiefly for the

ASSISTANCE

Of THOSE who inſtruct OTHERS in the

ART OF READING.

And of thoſe who are often called to SPEAK in

PUBLICK.

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Winkworth! Hey Brain's a Maze,
more difficult than They
BRITISH MUSEUM

AN ESSAY ON ELOCUTION, OR, PRONUNCIATION.

ELOCUTION is a Branch of Oratory, the Power and Importance of which is greater than is generally thought; insomuch that Eloquence takes it's Name from it (*a*).

(*a*) Eloquentia ab *eloqui*. I uſe the word *Elocution* here in it's common and vulgar Senſe, to ſignify *Utterance, Delivery*, or *Pronunciation*, in which Senſe we frequently uſe it in the Engliſh Language, and which its Latin Etymology very well juſtifies; tho' I know ſome good Writers apply to it a different Idea, in conformity to the Senſe in which the Latin Orators uſed the word *Elocutio*. But it's no uncommon Thing

It was much cultivated by *Quintilian*, and before him by *Cicero*, and before him by *M. Antonius*; but before his Time, it was too much neglected by the *Roman* Orators: Which made him ſay, *He had ſeen many Men famous for Eloquence, but not one of them that underſtood Elocution* (*b*).

But what Streſs was laid upon it by the *Greek* Orators, appears from that celebrated Saying of *Demoſthenes*; who being aſked, what was the *firſt* principal Thing in Oratory? anſwered, *Pronunciation*; being aſked again what was the *ſecond?* replied, *Pronunciation.* And what was the *third? Pronunciation.* Denoting, that in his Judgment the whole Art, Spirit, and Power of Oratory conſiſted in this (*c*).

Cicero, and after him *Quintilian*, divided Oratory into five Parts: 1. *Invention*: By which

Thing for derivative Words in one Language to be taken in a different Senſe from that, in which the Words they are derived from are taken in another.

(*b*) A ſe diſertos viſos multos, eloquentem autem neminem. *Quintil.* lib. viii. proæm.

(*c*) *Quintil.* lib. xi. cap. 3. *Tully* in relating this Story concerning *Demoſthenes*, ſays, that the repeated Anſwer was *Actio*. (*de Oratore*, l. 3.) Which ſhews that the Latins by *Pronunciatio* and *Actio* meant the ſame thing; and that by each they underſtood the right and juſt Management of the Voice, Looks, and Geſture, in ſpeaking. And hence they whoſe Buſineſs it is to ſpeak publickly on the Stage, are with us called *Actors*.

which we provide ourſelves with ſuitable and ſufficient Materials for a Diſcourſe. 2. *Diſpoſition*: by which they meant the Diviſion of their Subject into Parts and Sentences, according to the moſt natural Order; and conſequently the proper Diſtribution and Arrangement of their Ideas. 3. *Elocution*: By which they always meant, what we call, *Diction*; which conſiſts in ſuiting our Words to our Ideas, and the Stile to the Subject. 4. *Memory*, or a Faculty of clearly diſcerning and retaining our Ideas, and of calling to Mind the propereſt Words by which to expreſs them. 5. *Pronunciation*; or the Art of managing the Voice, and Geſture in ſpeaking (*d*).

So that by *Pronunciation*, the Ancients underſtood both *Elocution* and *Action*; and comprehended in it the right Management of the Voice, Looks, and Geſture. To the former of theſe the preſent Eſſay is chiefly confined; *viz.* the right Management of the Voice in reading or ſpeaking; which is indifferently called by us, *Elocution* and *Pronunciation.*

The great Deſign and End of a good Pronunciation is, to make the Ideas ſeem to come from the Heart; and then they will not fail to excite the Attention and Affections of them that

(*d*) Cic. Rhetoric. lib. i.

that hear us (*e*): From which the great Benefit and Uſefulneſs of this too much neglected Art may be ſeen.

The Deſign of this Eſſay is to ſhew

I. What a bad Pronunciation is, and how to avoid it.

II. What a good Pronunciation is, and how to attain it.

SECTION I.

What a bad Pronunciation is, and how to avoid it.

1. *WHAT a bad Pronunciation is.*

Now the ſeveral Faults of Pronunciation are theſe following.

1. When

(*e*) *Hoc ſcire tamen oportet pronunciationem bonam id efficere, ut res ex animo agi videatur.*
Incerti Author, ad C. Herenium, lib. 4.

1. When the Voice is too loud.

This is very diſagreeable to the Hearer, and very inconvenient to the Speaker.

It will be very diſagreeable to the *Hearers*, if they be Perſons of good Taſte: who will always look upon it to be the Effect either of *Ignorance* or *Affectation*.

Some will impute it to your *Ignorance*, and ſuppoſe that you was never inſtructed better ſince you left the Reading-School; where Children generally get a Habit of reading in a high-pitched Key, or a uniform elevated Voice, without any Regard to Emphaſis, Cadence or a graceful Elocution.

Others will impute it to *Affectation*; or a Deſign to work upon their Paſſions; which will immediately defeat the Deſign, if you had it. For if you would effectually move the Paſſions, you muſt carefully conceal your Intention ſo to do: For as ſoon as the Mind perceives you have ſuch a Deſign upon it, it will be upon its Guard. However, none but the moſt low, weak, and mechanical Minds will be affected with mere Dint of Sound and Noiſe. And the Paſſions ſo raiſed, leave no laſting or valuable Effects upon the Mind, and anſwer no good Purpoſe or End; be-

cauſe

cauſe the Underſtanding hath nothing to do with ſuch Impreſſions, and the Memory no Handle by which to retain or recall them. Not to ſay, it often anſwers a bad End; affects the Mind in a wrong Place, and gives it a falſe Bias. However this may be thought to become the Stage or the Bar, it leaſt of all befits the Pulpit; where all ought to be ſolemn, ſerious, rational and grave as the Subjects there treated of.

It is falſe Oratory then to ſeek to perſwade or affect by mere Vehemence of Voice. A Thing that has been often attempted by Men of mean Furniture, low Genius, or bad Taſte, among the Ancients as well as the Moderns. A Practice which formerly gave the judicious *Quintilian* great Offence: Who calls it not only clamouring, but *furious Bellowing*; not Vehemence, but downright *Violence (f)*.

Beſides, an overſtrained Voice is very inconvenient to the *Speaker*, as well as diſguſtful to judicious Hearers. It exhauſts his Spirits to no Purpoſe. And takes from him the proper Management and Modulation of his Voice according to the Senſe of his Subject. And,

(f) Nam et *clamant* ubique, et omnino *emugiunt*, multo diſcurſu, anhelitu, jactatione, geſtu, motu capitis, *furentes*. Illi hanc *vim* appellant, quæ eſt potius *violentia*.

Quint. lib. xi. cap. 12.

And, what is worſt of all, it naturally leads him into a Tone.

Every Man's Voice indeed ſhould fill the Place where he ſpeaks; but if it exceed its natural Key, it will be neither ſweet nor ſoft, nor agreeable, becauſe he will not be able to give every Word its proper and diſtinguiſhing Sound (*g*).

2. Another Fault in Pronunciation is when the Voice is too low.

This is not ſo inconvenient to the Speaker, but is as diſagreeable to the Hearer, as the other Extreme. And indeed to the Generality of Hearers a too low Voice is much more diſpleaſing than a too loud one; eſpecially to thoſe who are troubled with an Impediment in hearing, and thoſe who are beſt pleaſed with a lively and pathetick Addreſs, as moſt are. It is always offenſive to an Audience to obſerve any Thing in the Reader or Speaker that looks like Indolence or Inattention. The Hearer will never be affected whilſt he ſees the Speaker indifferent.

The Art of governing the Voice conſiſts a good deal in dexterouſly avoiding theſe two Extremes: At leaſt, this ought to be firſt

(*g*) Vox autem ultra vires urgenda non eſt; nam et ſuffocata ſæpe, et majore niſu minùs clara eſt. *Quint.* lib. xi. c. 3.

minded. And for a general Rule to direct you herein, I know of none better than this, *viz. carefully to preſerve the Key, (that is, the Command) of your Voice; and at the ſame Time, to adapt the Elevation and Strength of it to the Condition and Number of the Perſons you ſpeak to, and the Nature of the Place you ſpeak in.* It would be altogether as ridiculous in a General who is haranguing an Army to ſpeak in a low and languid Voice, as in a Perſon who reads a Chapter in a Family to ſpeak in a loud and eager one.

3. Another Fault in Pronunciation is a thick, haſty, cluttering Voice.

When a Perſon mumbles, or (as we ſay) clips or ſwallows his Words, that is, leaves out ſome Syllables in the long Words, and never pronounces ſome of the ſhort ones at all; but hurries on without any Care to be heard diſtinctly, or to give his Words their full Sound, or his Hearers the full Senſe of them.

This is often owing to a Defect in the Organs of Speech, or a too great Flutter of the animal Spirits; but oftener to a bad Habit uncorrected.

Demoſthenes the greateſt Orator *Greece* ever produced, had, it is ſaid, nevertheleſs,

three

three natural Impediments in Pronunciation; all which he conquered by invincible Labour and Perſeverance. One was a Weakneſs of Voice; which he cured by frequently declaiming on the Sea-Shore, amidſt the Noiſe of the Waves. Another was a Shortneſs of Breath; which he mended by repeating his Orations as he walked up a Hill. And the other was the Fault I am ſpeaking of; a thick mumbling Way of ſpeaking; which he broke himſelf of by declaiming with Pebbles in his Mouth (*b*).

4. Another Fault in Pronunciation is when Perſons ſpeak too quick (*i*).

Than which there is ſcarce any Fault more common; eſpecially among young Perſons, who imagine they can read very well, and are not afraid of being ſtopped in their Career by the unexpected Intervention of any hard Word. And ſcarce any bad Habit of the Voice is conquered with more Difficulty; tho' one would imagine nothing is more eaſy.

This Manner of reading may do well enough when we are examining Leaſes, peruſing

(*b*) Lives of the Claſſic Auth. Vol. II. p. 36, 37.

(*i*) Nec Volubilitate nimiâ confundenda quæ dicimus; quo et Diſtinctio perit et affectus; et nonnunquam etiam verba aliquâ ſui parte fraudantur. *Quint.* lib. xi. cap. 3.

ruſing Indentures, or reciting Acts of Parliament, where there is always a great Superfluity of Words; or in reading a News-Paper, where there is but little Matter that deſerves our Attention; but is very improper in reading Books of Devotion and Inſtruction, and eſpecially the ſacred Scriptures, where the Solemnity of the Subject, or the Weight of the Senſe demands a particular Regard. But it is moſt of all inexcuſable to read Forms of Prayer in this Manner as Acts of Devotion.

The great Diſadvantage which attends this Manner of Pronunciation is, that the Hearer loſes the Benefit of more than Half the good Things he hears, and would fain remember, but cannot. And a Speaker ſhould always have a Regard to the Memory as well as the Underſtanding of his Hearers (*k*).

5. It is alſo a Fault to ſpeak too ſlow.

Some are apt to read in a heavy, droning, ſleepy Way; and through mere Careleſſneſs make Pauſes at improper Places. This is very diſagreeable. But to hemm, hauk, ſneeze, yawn, or cough, between the Periods, is more ſo.

A too

(*k*) Cum enim fertur, quaſi torrens, Oratio, quamvis multa cujuſque modi rapiat, nihil tamen teneas, nihil apprehendas. Cic. de Fin. lib. ii. cap. 1.

A too ſlow Elocution is moſt faulty in reading Trifles that do not require Attention. It then becomes tedious. A Perſon that is addicted to this ſlow Way of ſpeaking ſhould always take care to reward his Hearer's Patience with important Sentiments, and compenſate the Want of Words by a Weight of Thought; and give his Diſcourſe its proper Quantity of ſolid Senſe, that (as we ſay) what it wants in Length it may make out in Breadth.

But a too ſlow Elocution is a Fault very rarely to be found, unleſs in aged People, and thoſe who naturally ſpeak ſo in common Converſation. And in theſe, if the Pronunciation be in all other Reſpects juſt, decent, and proper; and eſpecially if the Subject be weighty or intricate, it is very excuſable.

6. An irregular or uneven Voice, is a great Fault in reading.

That is, when the Voice riſes and falls by Fits and Starts, or when it is elevated or depreſſed unnaturally or unſeaſonably, without Regard to Senſe or Stops; or always beginning a Sentence with a high Voice, and concluding it with a low one, or *vice verſa*; or always beginning and concluding it with the ſame Key. Oppoſite to this is

7. A flat, dull, uniform, Tone of Voice, without Emphaſis or Cadence, or any Regard to the Senſe or Subject of what is read.

This is a Habit, which Children, who have been uſed to read their Leſſons by way of Taſk, are very apt to fall into, and retain as they grow up. Such a Monotony as Attorney's Clerks read in when they examine an engroſſed Deed. This is a great Infelicity when it becomes habitual; becauſe it deprives the Hearer of the greateſt Part of the Benefit or Advantage he might receive by a cloſe Attention to the moſt weighty and intereſting Parts of the Subject, which ſhould always be diſtinguiſhed or pointed out by the Pronunciation. For a juſt Pronunciation is a good Commentary: And therefore no Perſon ought to read a Chapter or a Pſalm in Publick, before he hath carefully read it over to himſelf once or twice in private. But

Laſtly, the greateſt and moſt common Fault of all is reading with a Tone.

No Habit is more eaſy to be contracted than this, or more hard to be conquered. This unnatural Tone in reading and ſpeaking is very various; but whatever it be, it is always

ways diſguſtful to Perſons of Delicacy and Judgment (*l*).

Some have a womaniſh ſqueaking Tone; which Perſons whoſe Voices are ſhrill and weak, and over-ſtrained, are very apt to fall into.

Some have a ſinging or canting Tone, which the Speakers among the Quakers generally much affect, and by which their Hearers are often much affected.

Others affect a high, ſwelling, theatrical Tone; who being ambitious of the Fame of fine Orators, lay too much Emphaſis on every Sentence, and thereby tranſgreſs the Rules of true Oratory.

Others affect an awful and ſtriking Tone, attended with ſolemn Grimace, as if they would move you with every Word, whether the Weight of the Subject bear them out or not. This is what Perſons of a gloomy or melancholy Caſt of Mind are moſt apt to give into.

Some have a ſet, uniform Tone of Voice; which I have already taken notice of. And

Others,

(*l*) Sed quodcunque ex his Vitium magis tulerim quàm quo nunc maxime laboratur in cauſis omnibus Scholiſque, *cantandi*: quod inutilius ſit an fædius neſcio. *Quint.* lib. xi. cap. 3.

Others, an odd, whimſical, whining Tone, peculiar to themſelves, and not to be deſcribed; only that it is laying the Emphaſis on Words which do not require or deſerve it.

It muſt be owned, there are ſome Kinds of Tone, which, though unnatural, yet, as managed by the Speakers, are not very diſagreeable; and the Mind muſt be much on its Guard that can remain unmoved thereby.

When I have been affected with hearing ſome Preachers deliver common or obſcure Sentiments in ſuch a ſtriking Tone, I have endeavoured carefully to examine into the true Reaſon of that Emotion, or what it was that excited that Affection in my Mind; and have found that it could not ariſe from the mere Tone of the Speaker, (which of itſelf was unnatural and diſagreeable) nor from the Weight of the Subject, (which was no more than common) but from the Earneſtneſs, Life and Solemnity with which he ſpake, and his appearing himſelf to be much affected with what he delivered; which two Things will never fail to move an Audience. And why they may not be as well obſerved and practiſed without a Tone as with one, I cannot conceive. And without theſe I verily believe a Tone itſelf would have no Power to move; and that it hath no other Subſerviency to raiſe the

the Paſſions than as it ſolemnizes the Subject, and ſeems to ſhew the Speaker's Heart engaged. Pity that thoſe two Ends ſhould not be anſwered by a better Means! and that a bad Habit in the Speaker, indulging a falſe Taſte in the Hearers, ſhould ſecure one great End of Oratory by that which is the greateſt Abuſe of it!

Theſe are the moſt common Faults of a bad Pronunciation. Our next Enquiry is

II. *How to avoid them.*

To this End the few following Rules may be of Service.

1. If you would not read in too loud or too low a Voice, conſider whether your Voice be naturally too low or loud; and correct it accordingly in your ordinary Converſation: by which means you will be better able to correct it in reading. If it be too low, converſe with thoſe that are deaf; if too loud, with thoſe whoſe Voices are low. Begin your Periods with an even moderate Voice, that you may have the Command of it, to raiſe or fall it as the Subject requires.

2. To cure a thick confuſed cluttering Voice, accuſtom yourſelf, both in Converſa-

tion and Reading, to pronounce every Word diſtinct and clear. Obſerve with what Deliberation ſome converſe and read, and how full a Sound they give to every Word; and imitate them. Do not affect to contract your Words, (as ſome do) or run two into one. This may do very well in Converſation, or in reading familiar Dialogues, but is not ſo decent in grave and ſolemn Subjects; eſpecially in reading the ſacred Scriptures.

It appears from *Demoſthenes*'s Caſe, that this Fault of Pronunciation cannot be cured without much Difficulty, nor will you find his Remedy effectual without Pains and Perſeverance.

3. To break a Habit of reading too faſt, attend diligently to the Senſe, Weight, and Propriety of every Sentence you read, and of every emphatical Word in it. This will not only be an Advantage to yourſelf, but a double one to your Hearers; for it will at once give them Time to do the ſame, and excite their Attention when they ſee yours is fixed. A ſolemn Pauſe after a weighty Thought is very beautiful and ſtriking.—— A well-timed Stop gives as much Grace to Speech as it does to Muſick.——Imagine that you are reading to Perſons of ſlow and unready Conceptions; and meaſure not your Hearer's Apprehenſion by your own. If you

do, you may poſſibly out-run it. And as in reading you are not at Liberty to repeat your Words and Sentences; *that* ſhould engage you to be very deliberate in pronouncing them, that their Senſe may not be loſt. The Eaſe and Advantage that will ariſe both to the Reader, and Hearer, by a free, full, and deliberate Pronunciation is hardly to be imagined.

I need lay down no Rules to avoid a too ſlow Pronunciation; that being a Fault which few are guilty of.

4. To cure an uneven, deſultory Voice, take care that you do not begin your Periods either in too high, or too low, a Key; for that will neceſſarily lead you to an unnatural and improper Variation of it. Have a careful Regard to the Nature and Quantity of your Points, and the Length of your Periods; and keep your Mind intent on the Senſe, Subject, and Spirit of your Author.

The ſame Directions are neceſſary to avoid a *Monotony* in Pronunciation, or a dull, ſet, uniform Tone of Voice. For if your Mind be but attentive to the Senſe of your Subject, you will naturally manage and modulate your Voice according to the Nature and Importance of it.

Laſtly, To avoid all Kinds of unnatural and diſagreeable Tones, the only Rule is to endeavour to ſpeak with the ſame Eaſe and Freedom as you would do on the ſame Subject in private Converſation. You hear no body converſe in a Tone; unleſs they have the Brogue of ſome other Country; or have got into a Habit (as ſome have,) of altering the natural Key of their Voice when they are talking of ſome ſerious Subject in Religion. But I can ſee no Reaſon in the World, that when in common Converſation we ſpeak in a natural Voice with proper Accent and Emphaſis, yet as ſoon as we begin to read, or talk of Religion, or ſpeak in Publick, we ſhould immediately aſſume a ſtiff, aukward, unnatural Tone. If we are indeed deeply affected with the Subject we read or talk of, the Voice will naturally vary according to the Paſſion excited; but if we vary it unnaturally, only to ſeem affected, or with a Deſign to affect others, it then becomes a Tone and is offenſive.

In reading then attend to your Subject, and deliver it juſt in ſuch a Manner as you would do if you were talking of it. This is the great, general and moſt important Rule of all; which, if carefully obſerved, will correct not only this, but almoſt all the other Faults of a bad Pronunciation; and give you an eaſy, decent, graceful Delivery, agreeable

to

to all the Rules of a right Elocution. For however apt we are to tranſgreſs them in reading, we follow them naturally and eaſily enough in Converſation. And Children will tell a Story with all the natural Graces and Beauties of Pronunciation, however aukwardly they may read the ſame out of a Book (*m*).

And therefore to attain a juſt and proper Pronunciation in reading, it will be adviſeable to begin with thoſe Books that are writ in a familiar Stile, that comes neareſt to that of common Converſation; ſuch as the *Pilgrim's Progreſs*, the *Family Inſtructor*, or ſome innocent *Novel*.

SECTION II.

What a good Pronunciation is, and how to attain it.

1. WHAT *a good Pronunciation* is.

A good

(*m*) *Let the Tone and Sound of your Voice in* reading *be the ſame as it is in* ſpeaking; *and do not affect to change that natural and eaſy Sound wherewith you* ſpeak, *for a ſtrange, new, aukward Tone, as ſome do when they begin to* read; *which would almoſt perſwade our Ears, that the* Speaker, *and the* Reader *were two different Perſons, if our Eyes did not tell us the contrary.* WATTS's Art of Reading.

A good Pronunciation *in reading*, is the Art of managing and governing the Voice ſo as to expreſs the full Senſe and Spirit of your Author, in that juſt, decent, and graceful Manner, which will not only inſtruct, but affect, the Hearers; and will not only raiſe in them the ſame Ideas he intended to convey, but the ſame Paſſions he really felt. This is the great End of reading to others; and this End can only be attained by a proper and juſt Pronunciation.

And hence we may learn wherein a good Pronunciation *in ſpeaking* conſiſts; which is nothing but a natural, eaſy, and graceful Variation of the Voice, ſuitable to the Nature and Importance of the Sentiments we deliver.

A good Pronunciation in both theſe Reſpects is more eaſily attained by ſome than others; as ſome can more readily enter into the Senſe and Sentiments of an Author, and more eaſily deliver their own, than others can; and at the ſame Time have a more happy Facility of expreſſing all the proper Variations and Modulations of the Voice than others have. Thus Perſons of a quick Apprehenſion, and a briſk Flow of animal Spirits (ſetting aſide all Impediments of the Organs) have generally a more lively, juſt, and

natural

natural Elocution than Perſons of a ſlow Perception and a flegmatick Caſt. However, it may in a good Degree be attained by every one that will carefully attend to and practiſe thoſe Rules that are proper to acquire it. Which leads me therefore

II. To enquire how a good Pronunciation is to be attained.

And to this End the Obſervation of the following Rules is neceſſary.

1. Have a particular Regard to your *Pauſes*, *Emphaſis*, and *Cadence*.

1. To your *Pauſes*.

And with reſpect to this, you will in a good meaſure in reading be directed by the Points: but not perfectly; for there are but few Books that are exactly pointed.

The common Stops, or Points, are theſe: A *Comma* (,), *Semi-colon* (;), *Colon* (:), *Period* (.), *Interrogation* (?), and *Admiration* (!).

But beſide theſe, there are four more Notes or Diſtinctions of Pauſe, *viz.* a *Parentheſis* (()); which requires the Pauſe of a *Comma* at

at leaſt, and ſometimes a *Semi-colon* after it. 2. a *Double-Period*, or *Blank Line*, (——); which denote the Pauſe of two Periods, or half a Paragraph. 3. A *Paragraph* or *Break*; when the Line is broke or left imperfect, and the next begins under the ſecond or third Letter of the preceding Line; and denotes the Pauſe of two double Periods. 4. A *double Paragraph*, that is, when the next Line not only begins ſhorter than the preceding, but leaves the Space of a whole Line vacant between them; which ſhews that the Voice is to reſt during the Time of two Paragraphs.

Theſe Points ſerve two Purpoſes. 1. To diſtinguiſh the Senſe of the Author. 2. To direct the Pronunciation of the Reader.

You are not to fetch your Breath (if it can be avoided) till you come to the Period or Full Stop; but a diſcernable Pauſe is to be made at every one, according to its proper Quantity, or Duration.

A Comma ſtops the Voice while we may privately tell *one*, a Semi-colon *two*; a Colon *three:* and a Period *four*.

Where the Periods are very long, you may take Breath at a Colon, or Semi-colon; and ſometimes at a Comma, but never where there

is

is no Stop at all. And that you may not be under a Neceſſity to take freſh Breath before you come to a proper Pauſe, it will be proper to look forward to the Cloſe of the Sentence, and meaſure the Length of it with your Eye before you begin it; that if it be long, you may take in a ſufficient Supply of Breath to carry you to the End of it.

To break a Habit of taking Breath too often in reading, accuſtom yourſelf to read long Periods, ſuch (for Inſtance) as the ſixteen firſt Lines in *Milton's Paradiſe Loſt*.

And after ſome weighty and important Sentiment, it will be proper to make a longer Pauſe than ordinary; and eſpecially towards the Cloſe or Application of a Diſcourſe or Sermon, (where the Subject uſually grows more ſerious and affecting) theſe long Pauſes are very proper; as they at once compoſe and affect the Mind, and give it Time to think. It will alſo be very helpful to the Speaker's Voice; and give his Pronunciation the Advantage of Variety, which is always pleaſing to the Hearers (*n*). And therefore in printing the moſt affecting Parts of a Diſcourſe, there

(*n*) Intervalla Vocem confirmant: eâdem Sententias concinniores Diviſione reddunt, et Auditori Spatium cogitandi relinquunt. Conſervat Vocem continui Clamoris Remiſſio, et Auditorem quidem Varietas maximè delectat.

Incert. Auth. ad C. Heren. lib. iii.

there ſhould be (as we ſometimes ſee there is) a frequent Uſe of the long Pauſes, *viz.* the Periods, blank Lines, and Paragraphs.

But after all, there is ſo much Licenſe admitted, and ſo much Irregularity introduced, into the modern Method of Punctation, that it is become a very imperfect Rule to direct a juſt Pronunciation. The Pauſes therefore, as well as the Variations of the Voice, muſt be chiefly regulated by a careful Attention to the Senſe and Importance of the Subject.

2. The next Thing to be regarded in reading is the *Emphaſis*; and to ſee that it be always laid on the emphatical Word.

When we diſtinguiſh any particular Syllable in a Word with a ſtrong Voice, it is called *Accent*; when we thus diſtinguiſh any particular Word in a Sentence, it is called *Emphaſis*; and the Word ſo diſtinguiſhed, the *emphatical Word.* And the emphatical Words (for there are often more than one) in a Sentence are thoſe which carry a Weight or Importance in themſelves, or thoſe on which the Senſe of the reſt depends; and theſe muſt always be diſtinguiſhed by a fuller and ſtronger Sound of Voice, wherever they are found, whether in the Beginning, Middle, or End

of

of a Sentence. Take for Inſtance thoſe Words of the Satyriſt.

——————————*Rém, facias Rém,*
Récte, ſi poſſis; ſi non, quocúnque, Modo Rém.
HOR.
Get Pláce and Weálth, if poſſible, with Gráce,
If not, by ány Means get Weálth and Pláce.
POPE.

In theſe Lines the emphatical Words are accented; and which they are, the Senſe will always diſcover.

Here it may not be amiſs briefly to obſerve two or three Things.

1. That ſome Sentences are ſo full and comprehenſive, that almoſt every Word is emphatical: For Inſtance, that pathetick Expoſtulation in the Prophecy of *Ezekiel.*

Why will ye die!

In this ſhort Sentence, every Word is emphatical, and on which ever Word you lay the Emphaſis, whether the firſt, ſecond, third, or fourth, it ſtrikes out a different Senſe, and opens a new Subject of moving Expoſtulation (*o*).

(*o*) See this particularly illuſtrated in *Reynolds's compaſſionate Addreſs.*

2. Some Sentences are equivocal, as well as ſome Words; that is, contain in them more Senſes than one; and which is the Senſe intended, can only be known by obſerving on what Word the Emphaſis is laid. For Inſtance,—*Shall you ride to Town to-day?* This Queſtion is capable of being taken in four different Senſes, according to the different Words on which you lay the Emphaſis. If it be laid on the Word [you], the Anſwer may be, *No, but I intend to ſend my Servant in my ſtead.* If the Emphaſis be laid on the Word [ride], the proper Anſwer might be, *No, I intend to walk it.* If you place the Emphaſis on the Word [Town], it is a different Queſtion; and the Anſwer may be, *No, for I deſign to ride into the Country.* And if the Emphaſis be laid upon the Words [*to-day*], the Senſe is ſtill ſomething different from all theſe; and the proper Anſwer may be, *No, but I ſhall to-morrow.* Of ſuch Importance oftentimes is a right Emphaſis, in order to determine the proper Senſe of what we read or ſpeak. But I would obſerve

3. The Voice muſt expreſs, as near as may be, the very Senſe or Idea deſigned to be conveyed by the emphatical Word; by a ſtrong, rough, and violent, or a ſoft, ſmooth, and tender Sound.

Thus

Thus the different Paſſions of the Mind are to be expreſſed by a different Sound or Tone of Voice. *Love*, by a ſoft, ſmooth, languiſhing Voice; *Anger*, by a ſtrong, vehement, and elevated Voice; *Joy*, by a quick, ſweet, and clear Voice; *Sorrow*, by a low, flexible, interrupted Voice; *Fear*, by a dejected, tremulous, heſitating Voice; *Courage*, hath a full, bold, and loud Voice; and *Perplexity*, a grave, ſteady, and earneſt one. Briefly, in *Exordiums* the Voice ſhould be low; in *Narrations* diſtinct; in *Reaſoning*, ſlow; in *Perſwaſions*, ſtrong: It ſhould thunder in *Anger*, ſoften in *Sorrow*, tremble in *Fear*, and melt in *Love (p)*.

4. The Variation of the Emphaſis muſt not only diſtinguiſh the various Paſſions deſcribed, but the ſeveral Forms and Figures of Speech in which they are expreſſed. *e. g.*

In a *Proſopopœia*, we muſt change the Voice as the Perſon introduced would.

In an *Antitheſis*, one contrary muſt be pronounced louder than the other.

In a *Climax*, the Voice ſhould always riſe with it.

In

(*p*) Apta Pronunciatio certê ea eſt quæ iis de quibus dicimus accommodatur. *Quint.* lib. i. cap. 3.

In *Dialogues*, it ſhould alter with the Parts.

In *Repetitions*, it ſhould be loudeſt in the ſecond Place.

Words of Quality and Diſtinction, or of Praiſe or Diſpraiſe, muſt be pronounced with a ſtrong Emphaſis (*q*).

Hence then it follows

Laſtly, That no Emphaſis at all is better than a wrong or a miſplaced one. For *that* only perplexes, *this* always miſleads the Mind of the Hearer.

3. The next Thing to be obſerv'd is *Cadence*.

This is directly oppoſite to *Emphaſis*. *Emphaſis* is raiſing the Voice; *Cadence* is falling it; and when rightly managed is very muſical.

But beſide a Cadence of Voice, there is ſuch a Thing as Cadence of Stile. And that is, when the Senſe being almoſt expreſſed and perfectly diſcerned by the Reader, the remaining Words (which are only neceſſary to compleat

(*q*) See *Rules for Speaking and Action, in a Letter to a Friend*, p. 24.

pleat the Period) gently fall of themſelves without any emphatical Word among them. And if your Author's Language be pure and elegant, his Cadence of Stile will naturally direct your Cadence of Voice.

Cadence generally takes Place at the End of a Sentence; unleſs it cloſes with an emphatical Word.

Every *Parentheſis* is to be pronounced in Cadence; that is, with a low Voice, and quicker than ordinary; that it may not take off the Attention too much from the Senſe of the Period it interrupts. But all *Apoſtrophes* and *Proſopopœias* are to be pronounced in *Emphaſis*.

So much for *Pauſes*, *Emphaſis*, and *Cadence*: A careful Regard to all which is the firſt Rule for attaining a right Pronunciation.

II. If you would acquire a juſt Pronunciation in Reading you muſt not only take in the full Senſe, but enter into the Spirit of your Author: For you can never convey the Force and Fulneſs of his Ideas to another till you feel them yourſelf. No Man can read an Author he does not perfectly underſtand and taſte.

" The

" The great Rule which the Maſters of " Rhetorick ſo much preſs, can never enough " be remembered; *that to make a Man ſpeak* " *well and pronounce with a right Emphaſis,* " *he ought thoroughly to underſtand all that* " *he ſays, be fully perſwaded of it, and bring* " *himſelf to have thoſe Affections which he* " *deſires to infuſe into others.* He that is in- " wardly perſwaded of the Truth of what he " ſays, and that hath a Concern about it in " his Mind, will pronounce with a natural " Vehemence that is far more lovely than all " the Strains that Art can lead him to. An " Orator muſt endeavour to feel what he " ſays, and then he will ſpeak ſo as to make " others feel it (*r*)."

This is a very general and important Rule, and (as the Biſhop ſays) can never enough be remembered; and hence it is that ſo few are able to read *Milton* or *Young*.

The ſame Rules are to be obſerved in reading Poetry and Proſe: Neither the Rhyme, nor the Numbers, ſhould take off your Attention from the Senſe, and Spirit, of your Author. It is this only that muſt direct your Pronunciation in Poetry as well as Proſe. When you read Verſe, you muſt not at all favour the

(*r*) Burnet's *Paſtoral Care*, p. 228.

the Measure, or Rhime; *that* often obscures the Sense and spoils the Pronunciation: For the great End of Pronunciation is to elucidate and heighten the Sense; that is, to represent it not only in a clear, but a strong, Light. Whatever then obstructs this is carefully to be avoided, both in Verse, and Prose. Nay, this ought to be more carefully observed in reading Verse, than Prose; because the Author, by a constant Attention to his Measures and Rhime, and the Exaltation of his Language, is often very apt to obscure his Sense; which therefore requires the more Care in the Reader to discover and distinguish it by the Pronunciation. And if when you read Verse with proper Pause, Emphasis and Cadence, and a Pronunciation varied and governed by the Sense, it be not harmonious and beautiful, the Fault is not in the Reader, but the Author. And if the Verse be good, to read it thus will improve its Harmony; because it will take off that Uniformity of Sound and Accent which tires the Ear, and makes the Numbers heavy and disagreeable.

III. Another important Rule to be observed in Elocution is, *Study Nature*. By this I mean

1. Your own natural Dispositions and Affections. And those Subjects that are most

ſuitable to them, you will eaſily pronounce with a beautiful Propriety: And to heighten the Pronunciation, the natural Warmth of the Mind ſhould be permitted to have its Courſe under a proper Rein and Regulation.

2. Study the natural Diſpoſitions and Affections of others. For ſome are much more eaſily impreſſed and moved one Way, and ſome another: And an Orator ſhould be acquainted with all the Avenues to the Heart.

3. Study the moſt eaſy and natural Way of expreſſing yourſelf, both as to the Tone of Voice, and the Mode of Speech. And this is beſt learnt by Obſervations on common Converſation; where all is free, natural and eaſy; where we are only intent on making ourſelves underſtood, and conveying our Ideas in a ſtrong, plain, and lively Manner, by the moſt natural Language, Pronunciation, and Action. And the nearer our Pronunciation in Publick comes to the Freedom and Eaſe of that we uſe in common Diſcourſe, (provided we keep up the Dignity of the Subject, and preſerve a Propriety of Expreſſion) the more juſt and natural and agreeable it will generally be.

Above all Things then *ſtudy Nature*; avoid Affectation; never uſe Art, if you have not

not the Art to conceal it: For whatever does not appear natural, can never be agreeable; much leſs, perſwaſive (*r*).

IV. Endeavour to keep your Mind collected and compoſed.

Guard againſt that Flutter and Timidity of Spirit, which is the common Infelicity of young, and eſpecially baſhful Perſons, when they firſt begin to ſpeak or read in Publick. This is a great Hinderance both to their Pronunciation and Invention; and at once gives both themſelves, and their Hearers, an unneceſſary Pain. It will by conſtant Oppoſition wear off. And the beſt Way to give the Mind a proper Degree of Aſſurance and Self-Command at ſuch a Time, is

1. To be entire Maſter of your Subject; and a Conſciouſneſs that you deliver to your Audience nothing but what is well worth their hearing, will give you a good Degree of Courage.

2. Endeavour to be wholly engaged in your Subject; and when the Mind is intent upon and warmed with it, it will forget that

(*r*) Naturam intueamur, hanc ſequamur. Similis eſt Arti plerumque Natura. *Quint.* lib. viii. cap. 3.

awful Deference it before paid to the Audience, which was ſo apt to diſconcert it.

3. If the Sight of your Hearers, or any of them diſcompoſe you, keep your Eyes from them.

V. Be ſure to keep up a Life, Spirit, and Energy in the Expreſſion; and let the Voice naturally vary according to the Variation of the Stile and Subject.

Whatever be the Subject, it will never be pleaſing, if the Stile be low and flat; nor will the Beauty of the Stile be diſcovered, if the Pronunciation be ſo.

Cicero obſerves there muſt be a *Glow* in our Stile if we would warm our Hearers (*s*). And who does not obſerve how ridiculous it is to pronounce the *ardens Verbum* in a cold lifeleſs Tone? And the Tranſition of the Voice (as before obſerved) muſt always correſpond with that of the Subject, and the Paſſions it was intended to excite.

VI. In order to attain a juſt and graceful Pronunciation, you ſhould accuſtom yourſelves frequently

(*s*) Nec unquam is qui audiret incenderetur, niſi *ardens* ad eum perveniret Oratio. *Cic.* de Orat.

frequently to hear thoſe who excel in it, whether at the Bar, or in the Pulpit; where you will ſee all the fore-mentioned Rules exemplified, and be able to account for all thoſe Graces and Beauties of Pronunciation which always pleaſed you, but you did not know why.

And indeed, the Art of Pronunciation, like all others, is better learnt by Imitation than Rule: But to be firſt acquainted with the Rules of it, will make the Imitation more eaſy. And beyond all that hath been ſaid, or can be deſcribed, you will obſerve a certain Agreeableneſs of Manner in ſome Preachers that is natural to them; not to be reduced to any Rule; and to be learnt by Imitation only; nor by that, unleſs it be, in ſome Degree, natural to you.

Laſtly, You ſhould frequently exerciſe yourſelf to read aloud according to the foregoing Rules.

It is Practice only that muſt give you the Faculty of an elegant Pronunciation. This, like other Habits, is only to be attained by often repeated Acts.

Orators indeed, as well as Poets, muſt be born ſo, or they will never excel in their reſpective

ſpective Arts: But that Part of Oratory which conſiſts in a decent and graceful Pronunciation, (provided there be no Defect in the Organs of Speech,) may be attained by Rule, Imitation, and Practice; and, when attained, will give a Beauty to your Speech, a Force to your Thoughts, and a Pleaſure to the Hearers, not to be expreſſed; and which all will admire, but none can imitate, unleſs they are firſt prepared for it by Art and Nature (*t*).

In fine, the great Advantage of a juſt Pronunciation is, that it will pleaſe all, whether they have no Taſte, a bad Taſte, or a good Taſte.

HERE I intended to have put an End to this Eſſay: But as under the Word [Pronunciation] the Ancients comprehended *Action*, as well as *Elocution*; and as a few general Rules concerning that, may be of Uſe to ſuch as ſpeak in Publick; I thought it might not be improper here briefly to ſubjoin them.

The Action then ſhould be as eaſy, and as natural, as the Elocution; and, like that, muſt be varied, and directed, by the Paſſions.

An

(*t*) —— —— —— —— —— —— —— ut ſibi quivis
Speret idem, ſudet multum, fruſtràque laboret
Auſus idem. *Hor.* de Art. Poet. l. 241.

An affected Violence of Motion is as diſguſtful as an affected Vehemence of Voice; and no Action, as bad as no Emphaſis: Which two Faults commonly go together; as do the other two, juſt before mentioned.

Thoſe Parts of the Body that are to be principally employed in Oratorical Action are the *Head*, the *Face*, the *Eyes*, the *Hands*, and the upper Part of the *whole Body*.

1. The *Head*. This ſhould generally be in an erect Poſture; turning ſometimes on one Side, and ſometimes on the other, that the Voice may be heard by the whole Audience, and a Regard paid to the ſeveral Parts of it.

It ſhould always be on the ſame Side with the Action of the Hands and Body, except when we expreſs an Abhorrence, or a Refuſal of any thing, which is done by rejecting it with the Right-hand, and turning away the Head to the Left; as in that Sentence—*Dii talem terris avertete peſtem*——where ſuch an Action is very proper in pronouncing the Word *avertete*.

2. The *Countenance*. In this is the Seat of the Soul, and the very Life of Action. Every Paſſion, whilſt uttered with the Tongue, ſhould be painted in the Face. There is often

more

more Eloquence in a Look than any Words can expreſs. By this we are awed, charmed, incenſed, ſoftened, grieved, rejoiced, raiſed, or dejected; according as we catch the Fire of the Speaker's Paſſion from his Face. In ſhort, there is no End in recounting the Force and Effects of this dumb Oratory; which Nature only teaches; and which Perſons of low Paſſions loſe all the Advantages of. Look well upon a good Piece of Painting where the Paſſions are ſtrongly expreſſed; and you will conceive the Power of it (*u*).

3. The *Eyes*. Theſe ſhould be carried from one Part of the Audience to another, with a modeſt and decent Reſpect; which will tend to recall and fix their Attention, and animate your own Spirit by obſerving their Attention fixed. But if their Affections be ſtrongly moved, and the obſerving it be a Means of raiſing your own too high, it will be neceſſary then to keep the Eye from off them. For though an Orator ſhould always be animated, he ſhould never be overcome by his Paſſions.

In all Appeals to Heaven, and ſometimes at the ſolemn Mention of the Name of the great God, the Eyes and the Head ſhould be turned upwards.

In

(*u*) Hic (Vultus) eſt ſæpe pro omnibus Verbis.
Quint. lib. xi. cap. 3.

In Adoration, the Hands and Eyes ſhould be lifted up, and the Head and Body bowing down.

In ſolemn Vows, Exclamations and Appeals to Heaven, the Hands, Head, and Eyes ſhould all be lifted up; but in Humiliation and Confeſſion bowed down.

The Language of the Eye is inexpreſſible. It is the Window of the Soul; from which ſometimes the whole Heart looks out at once, and ſpeaks more feelingly than all the warmeſt Strains of Oratory; and comes effectually in Aid of it, when the Paſſion is too ſtrong to be uttered.

4. The *Hands.*

The Left-hand ſhould never be uſed alone (*x*); unleſs it be to attend the Motion of the Head and Eyes in an Addreſs to the Audience on the left Side.

The Right-hand may be often uſed alone.

When you ſpeak of the Body, you may point to it with the middle Finger of your Right-hand.

When you ſpeak of your Soul or Conſcience you may lay your Right-hand gently on your Breaſt.

(*x*) Manus Siniſtra nunquam ſola geſtum recte facit: Dextræ ſe frequenter accommodat. *Quint.* lib. xi. cap. 3.

It ſhould be often diſplayed with an Eaſy Motion to favour an Emphaſis; but ſeldom or never be quite extended.

All its Motions ſhould be from the Left to the Right.

Both the Hands diſplayed, and the Arms extended is a violent Action, and never juſt or decent unleſs the Audience be noiſy, and Part of them at a Diſtance from the Speaker, and he is labouring to be heard; and then they ſhould never be extended higher than the Head, unleſs pointing at ſomething above the Audience *(y)*.

The Motion of the Hand ſhould always correſpond with thoſe of the Head and Eyes; as *they* ſhould with the Paſſions expreſſed.

In deliberate Proof or Argumentation, no Action is more proper or natural than gently to lay the firſt Finger of the Right-hand on the Palm of the Left.

Of what great Uſe the proper Motion of the Hand is in aſſiſting Pronunciation, and how many Paſſions may be ſtrongly indicated thereby, when attended with that of the Head and Eyes, is not eaſy to be deſcribed, but is ſoon obſerved in common Converſation.

Laſtly,

(*y*) See *Raphael*'s Cartoon, repreſenting St. *Paul* preaching at *Athens*.

Laſtly, The Poſture of the *Body*.

This ſhould be uſually erect; not continually changing, nor always motionleſs: Declining in Acts of Humiliation; in Acts of Praiſe and Thankſgiving, raiſed.

It ſhould always accompany the Motion of the Hands, Head, and Eyes, when they are directed to any particular Part of the Audience; but never ſo far as to let the Back be turned to any Part of it.

But let it ſuffice juſt to hint at theſe Things. They who deſire to ſee them more largely treated of, may conſult *Quintilian de Inſtitutione Oratoriâ*, lib. xi. cap. 3.

But after all, with regard to Action, the great Rule is (the ſame as in Pronunciation) to *follow Nature, and avoid Affectation*. The Action of the Body, and the ſeveral Parts of it, muſt correſpond with the Pronunciation, as that does with the Stile, and the Stile with the Subject. A perfect Harmony of all which compleats the Orator (*z*).

(*z*) Thoſe who deſire to be more particularly acquainted with this Subject, and the ſeveral other Branches of Oratory, I would adviſe not to truſt altogether to the Rules of modern Writers, but to repair to the Fountain Head; and converſe with the great Maſters and Teachers of this Art among the Ancients; particularly *Dionyſius* of *Halicarnaſſus*, *Cicero*, *Quintilian*, and *Longinus*.

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